

## Citizenship Education in Maine: Clarifying the Problem Situation & Identifying Potential Solutions

	Hallmarks of an Effective Citizen	U.S. & Maine Data	Problem Definition	Potential Solutions
Civic Attitudes and Beliefs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>⊕ Democracy requires individual participation</li> <li>⊕ Many minds are better than one</li> <li>⊕ One person can change the system</li> <li>⊕ Respect for government and laws over passion and issues</li> <li>⊕ Civic structures help resolve conflict</li> <li>⊕ Tolerance for conflict and ambiguity</li> <li>⊕ Appreciation of constitutional principles and democratic traditions</li> <li>⊕ Curiosity about our nation and the world</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>⊕ Only 46% of youth say they can make a difference in solving community problems (CIRCLE, 2002)</li> <li>⊕ Only 12% of college students believe that volunteering on a campaign is a way to bring about significant change (Hart, 2001)</li> <li>⊕ Almost half our youth (49%) say voting is not important, 34% see voting as a choice, 20% as a responsibility and only 9% as a duty (CIRCLE, 2002)</li> <li>⊕ In 1960, 60% of college freshmen viewed keeping up with politics as “very important” or “essential,” compared with 33% this year, 31% last year and 28% in 2000 (HERI, UCLA, 2002)</li> <li>⊕ According to an international civic education study, only 46% of youth say they can make a difference in solving community problems</li> <li>⊕ Only 39% of Maine high school youth feel that adults make them feel important (Maine Marks, 2001)</li> <li>⊕ Just 43% of Maine high school students think that adults listen to them (Maine Marks, 2001)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>⊕ Many 15- to 26-year olds don’t understand the ideals of citizenship and have a limited appreciation for American democracy (ECS, 2003)</li> <li>⊕ Students do not see politics as a primary means of bringing about positive change</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>⊕ Development of a state action plan -- including vision, mission, resources, opportunities and capacity building -- for improving citizenship education policies and practices that can be effective in addressing these important issues</li> </ul>

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<b>Civic &amp; Political Knowledge &amp; Cognitive Skills</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>⊕ Understands the history, structure and processes of government and civic participation</li> <li>⊕ Understands the relationship between government and community</li> <li>⊕ Understands the roles of interest groups and the media our democracy</li> </ul> <p>Able to think critically, to formulate opinions and defend judgments</p> <p>Able to research political issues and obtain information and perspectives about these issues</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>⊕ Willingness to engage in dialogue with others and to understand diverse experiences</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>⊕ Most formal civic education today comprises only a single course on government; until the 1960s, as many as three courses in democracy, civics and government was common</li> <li>⊕ 88% of high school seniors say they discuss current issues in class and 80% of high school students take a government class; still, nearly 33% of high school seniors lack a basic understanding of how government operates (CIRCLE, 2002)</li> <li>⊕ 75% of students scored at “basic” or “below basic” levels on the Civics Assessment segment of the NAEP</li> <li>⊕ Federal and state mandates for standards-based education and assessment systems have significant implications for local decisions on curriculum and allocating resources for civics education (No Child Left Behind assessment focuses on math and reading; Maine Education Assessment will no longer assess social studies beginning in 2004)</li> <li>⊕ Only 33% of college freshmen view keeping up with politics as “very important” as compared to 31% in 2001 and 28% in 2000</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>⊕ Too many young people lack the basic understanding of government, democracy and civic participation</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>⊕ Broadening the civic mission of our schools is a priority and should prompt policymakers to take action</li> <li>⊕ Development of a state action plan -- including vision, mission, resources, opportunities and capacity building -- for improving citizenship education policies and practices that can be effective in addressing these important issues</li> </ul>

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Political and Community Participation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>⊕ Participates in their community through public service, voting, attending community meetings, volunteering or running for office</li> <li>⊕ Speaks out when they witness an injustice</li> <li>⊕ Encourages others to participate in the community</li> <li>⊕ Ability to work in groups and to speak in public</li> <li>⊕ Listens to and tolerate opposing opinions, compromises and remains open to new ideas</li> <li>⊕ Oral and written communication skills</li> <li>⊕ Obtains information and derives meaning from laws and dialogue</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>⊕ Voter turn-out rates among 18-24 year-olds have dropped by one-third since 1972; youth as a proportion of all voters had dropped from 14% in 1972 to 8% in 2000 (CIRCLE, 2002)</li> <li>⊕ Only 6% of college students participated in a political campaign during the 2000 election cycle; only 13% to 17% (depends on e-mail or mail) say that contacting an elected official will bring about significant change (Hart, 2001)</li> <li>⊕ 46% of U.S. high schools offer service-learning opportunities (U.S. Dept. of Education, 1999)</li> <li>⊕ 48% of Maine youth said they were engaged in community service (46% of which was organized through school) (Maine Marks, 2001)</li> <li>⊕ 50% of Maine youth feel they are given chances to make their city/town better (Maine Marks, 2001)</li> <li>⊕ The proportion of college freshmen that volunteer has risen steadily from two-thirds in 1989 to 81% in 2000 (Hart, 2001)</li> <li>⊕ In Maine, 58% of colleges have community services offices as compared to 59% nationally; and only 18% of these offices have full time staff compared with 64% nationally (Campus Compact, 2002)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>⊕ Too many young people are disengaged from politics and government (ECS, 2003)</li> <li>⊕ The good news is that more young people are volunteering and participating in community service activities</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>⊕ Development of state action plan -- vision, mission, opportunities, resources, capacity building -- for improving citizenship education policies and practices</li> </ul>

	Hallmarks of an Effective Citizenry	U.S. & Maine Data	Problem Definition	Potential Solutions
Social, Cultural and Political Contexts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>⊕ Policymakers, civic leaders and other community members consider the following factors in examining policies and practices that promote citizenship education:</li> <li>⊕ School</li> <li>⊕ Community</li> <li>⊕ Media</li> <li>⊕ Popular culture</li> <li>⊕ Peer culture</li> <li>⊕ Adult behavior</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>⊕ Secretary of State's Fostering Youth Involvement ("FYI") Initiatives -- including mock elections, voter registration, essay contests related to Maine history and our Constitution, and recognition for outstanding citizenship have engaged 33,346 students in Maine K-12 schools (from 1992 to 2002)</li> <li>⊕ Legislative Youth Advisory Council -- established in 2001, this council is comprised of 18 high school and college students from across the state and is authorized to address policy issues affecting youth</li> <li>⊕ Attorney General's Civil Rights Team Project -- has grown from 18 middle and high schools in 1996 to more than 194 schools, including 11 elementary schools, in 2003</li> <li>⊕ Maine Commission for Community Service -- established in 1994, serves as the lead partner with the Federal Corp. for National and Community Service; is comprised of 26 citizens who develop and implement Maine's vision for service</li> <li>⊕ Maine Mentoring Partnership -- 6,000 youth are in one-to-one mentoring matches; 10,000 youth are in group mentoring matches; over 2,000 youth are on waiting lists for mentors; there are over 120 mentor programs statewide</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>⊕ Advocates for citizenship education initiatives may not be working effectively with key policy actors -- educators, policymakers, judges, business leaders, non-profit officials, clergy and philanthropists -- to promote and coordinate policies and practices that engage our youth and provide them with appropriate opportunities for participating in the civic and political spheres of our democratic society</li> <li>⊕ Despite our best intentions and efforts, we may not be successful in engaging certain segments of our youth population</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>⊕ Allocating responsibility to the appropriate public or private sectors: the family, the state, the market or the non-profit sector</li> </ul>